(d) if so, the details thereof and the decision taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) It is not the Ministry of Panchayati Raj but the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions that is planning to convene a Conference of selected District Collectors to focus on the issue of governance at District level and to speed up the delivery of public services. The Conference is expected to be addressed by the Prime Minister and would result in a plan of action for improving the delivery system. As a prelude to the Conference, 8 regional workshops are being held at different training institutes. The Administrative Ministries concerned have been requested to prepare theme papers and also nominate a coordinator for attending the workshops and preparing a final report for discussion in the National Conference.

(c) and (d) No objections have been received by the Government to the above proposal.

Income tax exemption to private hospitals

*446. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether under the existing law, private hospitals get huge amount of income tax exemption for incurring expenses on medical research activities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the amount of tax exemption granted to such hospitals during the last three years in the four metropolitan cities in India, year-wise and hospital-wise together with the details of research conducted?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Under section 35 of the Income Tax Act, 1961, a private hospital is eligible to claim deduction on account of expenditure incurred on medical research activity.

(c) The Income Tax Department does not maintain data of deductions allowed on account of claims of the tax payers under the relevant provisions of the Act. It is, therefore, not feasible to furnish information in respect of private hospitals with regard to the deductions claimed by them u/s 35 of the Act, in respect of expenditure incurred on medical research activity.